





Fair, Rigorous and Aligned Assessments


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I TAUGHT
STRIPE HOW
TO WHISTLE



I DON'T HEAR
HIM WHISTLING



I SAID I TAUGHT
HIM. I DIDN'T SAY
HE LEARNED IT

BAD
BLAKE
5-6

How do you **know** if what you **taught**
a student has been **learned**?



You see if the student can
recall what you taught,
do what you taught or
show you what you taught.



You gather information.



If you **taught** him basic math skills, you **gather information** on his ability to recall and comprehend basic math skills.

However, if you **taught** him how to apply math skills in a real-world task, you **gather information** about his application of skills in a new or similar scenario.

Then, you **analyze results** based on the **benchmark or standard** of what you taught.



Why assess?

- *“Educational assessment seeks to determine how well students are learning and is an integral part of the quest for **improved education**. It provides feedback to students, educators, parents, policy makers, and the public about the **effectiveness of educational services**.”*

-- Knowing what students know: the science and design of educational assessment, Committee on the Foundations of Assessment, Center for Education, Division on Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education, National Research Council; James Pellegrino, Naomi Chudowsky, and Robert Glaser, editors, p. 1

How do assessments help teachers?

- Give teachers an **external benchmark** against which to gauge student learning
- Measure the level of success or proficiency that has been obtained at the end of a course of study by **comparing it against some standard or benchmark**
- Help teachers **identify curricular & instructional adjustments**



How do assessments help parents and students?

- Research on student learning shows that students learn best when the **expectations for their knowledge and skills are clear**
- Standards help **provide clear expectations** by specifying what students should know and be able to do
- **Assessments make these expectations concrete** by showing exactly how students should demonstrate what they know and can do

Why change assessments in TN?

- TCAP is a **Criterion Referenced Test**
- Criterion-Referenced items measure a student's performance according to **specific standards**, rather than to the performance of other test takers
- Current TCAP test items are directly aligned with the TN Diploma Project Content Standards and State Performance Indicators, **not the new TN Academic Content Standards**

**"Stop asking me if we're almost there.
We're nomads for crying out loud!"**



Why change assessments for rigor?

- A study of current U.S. state tests found that **very few state test items measure high levels of cognitive challenge**
- By contrast, studies of nations that perform well on the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) have found that those nations place more of an **emphasis on performance tasks that measure high-level skills and competencies**

Why is alignment critical?

- If student achievement is the goal and that goal is measured by standards-based assessments, the assessments must be aligned with the standards. If there is a disconnect among these elements, student achievement will not be evident and the test may not be valid



Alignment is an ongoing process

- We must **teach** what is important to **learn**
- We must **assess** what is **taught**
- We must **analyze results against the benchmark** to see if we are effective
- We must continually **realign** as needed to ensure students are continuing to achieve and grow



You don't
fatten
pigs
by
weighing
them!



Of course you don't, but you **do learn his weight** so you can determine what to feed him to get him ready for the blue ribbon at the fair!



Resources

- *Benchmarking Learning Systems: Student Performance Assessment in International Context* (L. Darling-Hammond)
- *Developing Assessments of Deeper Learning: The Costs and Benefits of Using Tests That Help Students Learn* (L. Darling-Hammond)
- *From Aptitude to Effort: A New Foundation for Our Schools* (L. Resnick)
- *Knowing What Students Know: The Science and Design of Educational Assessment* (National Research Council)
- *New Assessments: A Guide for State Policymakers* (Alliance for Excellent Education)
- *Transformative Assessment* (James Popham)
- www.assessment.uconn.edu

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THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 18TH